

The Bloomfield Record.

Memorial Hall.

The Philadelphia correspondent of the Times, describing the Centennial Buildings, says of the magnificent Memorial Hall:

Its architectural proportions are so just and so symmetrical that the eye, unaided by instruction, is powerless to gauge its dimensions. It has, for example, four pavilions, one at each corner, in each of which an ordinary Philadelphia mansion could be stowed away comfortably. The facade of the main entrance is sixty feet in height, and yet it does not seem thirty feet. The three doorways, the grand entrances, are more than thirty feet to the centre ornaments in the keystone of each arch, and yet they make no such impression of colossal height upon the eye. They are, without exception, the most tremendous openings of modern architecture, such as would make us gasp and stare if we were to see them at Baulbe or Luxor, because we have the idea of enormous dimensions fixed in our minds, and our eyes see everything through the coloring of that idea. Here in America, where we are accustomed to immense heights and commonplace details, colossal detail and moderate height take us so completely off our feet that we cannot master them. There is not a bit of sculpture, there is not a projection, there is not a balustrade, nor a window, nor piece of ornamentation anywhere which is not in such exact proportion to the mass of the whole as to seem an ordinary thing. For example, the keystone of each arch over the entrance is a colossal female head, twice the size of life, surrounded by wreaths of foliage. Being exactly proportioned to its height of more than thirty feet, its colossal character is impossible of detection, and from the correct manner in which it has been designed the features are not lost by the distance. They have been roughly, rudely cut, but the attitude fills in all the cavities, softens all the asperities, and makes each face beautifully refined and feminine. Had it been drawn on any other scale it would have been meaningless and inexpert.

An Englishwoman was recently tried for murder on the charge of having caused the death of her twin children by feeding them with "corn flour" after being warned by the physician that it would not sustain life. The woman was acquitted, but the occurrence has called forth much comment. An English physician says that it cannot be too widely known that "corn flour," as it is called, is pure starch, prepared by washing out of maize flour the nutritious portions with alkalies. When the flour presents an extremely white appearance, all the nutrition has been sacrificed, and children fed on such substances are simply starved. When the "corn flour" is cooked with milk, that will supply some of the nutriment that is lacking; but those who have the care of children should understand the nature of the flour itself.

The Hell Gate Excavations. On July 4, 1876, the great explosion which is to shatter the submarine rocks at Hallett's Point and open a navigable channel for vessels of large draft, island and going through Long Island Sound, to and from New York city will take place; such, at least, we understand to be the present intention of those in charge of the work. The excavations were completed about two months ago, and the operation now in progress consists in the boring of the holes in which the heavy charges of nitro-glycerin are to be placed. These borings are about half finished, and will require the labor of two or three months longer, after which two months more will be occupied in inserting the charges. The entire surface undermined measures 21 acres, and the cuttings aggregate 7,542 feet in length, varying in height from 8 to 22 feet and in width from 12 to 13 feet. There is a roof ten feet thick between the mine and the water; and the latter, at the outer edge of the excavation, is 26 feet deep at low tide. Between the headings and galleries heavy piers are left, which now sustain the immense weight of rock and water above. In each pier from ten to fifteen 2 and 3 inch holes are being drilled, and in the roof similar apertures are being made at intervals of 5 feet apart. All of these openings will be filled with nitro-glycerin, in charges of 8 and 10 pounds, and all will be connected together by gas pipes filled with the same explosive. This will be done during the cold weather, when the danger of lighting the nitro glycerin is greatly diminished. Previous to the explosion, the coffee dam will be broken away and the water allowed to fill the entire excavation, so that it will serve as a tamping. Then, by means of an electric fuse, the nitro-glycerin in the gas pipe will be fired, which will determine the blowing up of the whole affair. No fear is apprehended as to the result, since it has been determined that the explosion of half the charges will be sufficient to cave in the roof, deepening the water at once to a proper depth, or necessitating but little dredging to complete the work.

The new operations at Flood Rock will involve still greater cuttings than at Hallett's Point. The shaft is now down to a depth of 50 feet. The Hallett's Point work has been under way since 1869, but has been greatly delayed by the failure of Congress to provide sufficient appropriations; if the same course is to be followed with reference to the Flood Rock excavations, it will be manifestly impossible to form any estimate of their time of completion.—Scientific American.

WHY SHOULD PEOPLE READ?—Why should people read? and what is the real, solid value of printed matter? These are three good reasons for reading, and we can think of no others. They are to be made wiser, to be made nobler and to be innocently recreated. Books which neither confer information which is worth having, nor lift the spiritual part of us to loftier regions, nor, by judicious diversion, refreshen the mind for further serious efforts, are bad books, and the reading of such is invariably ill-dress, and usually the most dangerous kind of idleness. Reading is not, as many people nowadays seem to suppose, good in itself, as so many things are by no means as highly thought of. All energy that is not injurious, is good, and the reading of such is good, as walking, riding, boating and the rest. But the reading of which we speak can not under the most favorable construction, be regarded as energy. On the contrary, it is the very laziest form of laziness. People fly to it when they think they have nothing else to do, and they flatter themselves that by reading they are really doing something; and thus, nine times out of ten, they exonerate themselves from the obligation of performing some genuine duty which is distasteful to them.—Hull's Journal.

AN AFFECTING SCENE.—Yesterday when a Michigan avenue street car made the trip from Twelfth street to Woodward avenue inside of three hours the astonished passengers made up a purse of fourteen cents for the driver, and a red-headed man fell on his neck and exclaimed:

"I never thought I should live to see this thing!" A woman with a big breastpin on clasped his hand and said: "I want to die now: I can't stand this!" A boy with a new straw hat on leaned up against the car and wiped his nose and sobbed: "I wish father could have seen this afore the ager took him off!" The driver was much affected, and brushing a tear from his eye he replied: "I don't know how it happened. Don't tell the company or I shall be discharged!"

SHE REMONSTRATED.—A Philadelphia milliner apprentice went to visit her mother in the country one Sunday, and when that worthy matron beheld her child she exclaimed: "Isabel Marie Stephens, what on earth do you mean, coming out in broad daylight with your gown all kajummixed up in a heap behind you, and all bound up in that way in front of you? And hain't ye got no stockings all of one color, that ye haf to wear them zebra-colored things? Thought ye'd married a barber, and was playin' up signboard for him. Did I ever think one of my girls would come to this!"

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